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ing the estimation in which he is held by the princes of other countries, that he once went specially to Paris, and from thence to Chantilly, to paint the portraits of five race-horses, for the late lamented Duke of Orleans.

Mr. Herring left Doncaster, the town of his adoption, in 1830, after a residence of eighteen years, in which period he formed many friendships; no little recommended as his society was by talent of another description. He long figured as a member of the Doncaster Amateur Band (carried on under the kind care of Doctor Haigh, Professor of Music at Cambridge), and as a bass singer was considered a great acquisition, both in the church and concert-room. After a sojourn of three years at Six-mile Bottom, Newmarket, he returned once more to London, or rather to Camberwell, where he still resides. Since his re-appearance there, he has given his attention to a higher and nobler branch of the arts. As a painter of rural scenes, in which the horse and the dog are the prominent figures, he is now generally acknowledged to be second only to Landseer, and every picture he exhibits is sure to be bought up at a large price. Amongst some of the most attractive of his productions in this style, are "The Ferry," "Mazepa," "Peveril of the Peak," "Duncan's Horses" (in two pictures), "Going to the Fair," "The Timber Carriage," "Members of the Temperance Society," "The Frugal Meal," with many equally effective scenes from the farm and straw-yard.

Among his last and best pictures are the "Glimpse of an English Homestead," "An English Farm Yard," and "The Village Blacksmith," the latter being just placed upon exhibition. These have been engraved in uniform style, by the celebrated engraver, George Patterson, whose recent decease gives a melancholy interest and value to his last work—the "Blacksmith." Through these fine engravings the great painter has become well and popularly known to connoisseurs and turf-men on this side of the Atlantic.

That this recent newspaper announcement will be received with pleasure, we may readily believe:—

The COSMOPOLITAN ART ASSOCIATION has become the purchaser of J. F. Herring's last great painting of "The Village Blacksmith," paying for it the sum of six thousand dollars. The magnificent engraving made of this painting by the late lamented George Patterson, also becomes the

property (in plate and copyright) of the Association, whose enterprising management propose to place the engraving in the hands of every subscriber for the current year. The only mystery is how any happy concurrence of circumstances—how any patronage can afford to place a *thirty dollar* print at the disposal of every subscriber, for *three* dollars. But, we are assured it will be done, as Messrs. Williams & Stevens have turned the painting and engraving both over to the Association, agreeable to absolute purchase."

This paragraph will, then, advise the art-lovers of the country what is in store for them. We can only commend the picture and engraving to all, as entirely worthy of the encomiums which have been so freely lavished upon them by the press and the public. A description of the plate is given in "The Supplement" of this Journal.

WILLIAM LOUIS SONNTAG.

THE ancestral record of Americans, as a general thing, is not of "unbroken lines of greatness:—"—we are, in more ways than one, a *mixed* race, with a parentage drawn from the leading races of Europe, and lines here and there touched with Indian and African blood. Families which preserve lineage and blood with Norman, or Anglo-Saxon, or Celtic, or Scandinavian purity, are the exception. To this class Mr. Sonntag belongs, and whatever virtue comes of "pure decent" he, therefore, inherits. His family are of the best Saxon blood, coming from Frankfort-on-the-Main. Its representatives are numerous and have been widely distinguished in military and civil service, as well as in the arts. Admiral and General George S. Sonntag, late of the Russian service, was uncle to the subject of this notice. So also was the late John Haviland, of Philadelphia, an architect and builder, whose living monuments are such works as the "Tombs" prison of New-York, and the Mint and the Penitentiary, of Philadelphia. The father of William L. is an old and most successful merchant, now retired from business, enjoying the fruits of a life-long labor.

William Louis Sonntag was born near Pittsburg, Penn., in the year 1823. While yet an infant he was borne to Cincinnati, Ohio, where he passed the early years of

his life, and won his first recognition as an artist. His education was confided to Alexander Kinmont, one of the most accomplished scholars and profound thinkers of his day. At the age of eighteen, according to the immemorial usage of the family, he was "apprenticed to a trade," as affording the basis of a sturdy independence under adverse circumstances. Three days as carpenter's "cub" sufficed for his adventure in that direction—his "independence" leading him to another and more congenial pursuit, namely—that of the pencil and palette. Various means were adopted by the father to deter his boy from a profession which he stigmatized as beggarly in its rewards. Among others, William was sent on a mission to Wisconsin Territory, the parent hoping the excitement of "out West" life would root out the love for art which now thoroughly possessed the boy's heart. How mysteriously Fate counsels with her novices! The very means adopted to thwart the real taste of the boy were those which served to confirm all his impressions of beauty; and far, upon the boundless prairies, in the majestic forests, beside the glassy lakes and deep rivers of that Western solitude, the young artist erected an altar at which he has worshiped most faithfully in all his after-years. The pictures which now come from his hand show how vivid were the impressions made by, how devout was the study of those Western scenes.

Returning to Cincinnati, William was confided to the care of an architect named Jolasse—the father resolving that, if his boy would be an artist he should be a *practical* one, building real temples rather than castles in the air. But, alas for the Will which will not be harnessed! Three months under Mr. Jolasse were devoted to the freest kind of devices—the crayon *would not* follow straight lines—trees and hills and cool springs would grow on the spot where the architect ordered the front erection of a house or store. The persistent *obstinacy* of that pencil finally conquered all opposition; and, his father removing to the East, William Louis remained in Cincinnati to enter upon the "wide, wide sea" of Art.

Now came the struggle for bread, for recognition, for position, for fame, which has come almost to be the true artist's birthright. A Western town, where Hiram Powers only found a scanty support in modeling wax figures for the Museum, and



William Louis Sonntag.

machinery for the "Infernal Regions,"* was not likely to extend a very liberal patronage to the young painter. For several years his struggles brought scarcely enough of support to afford the necessary means of pursuing his profession; but Hope, kept alive by the consciousness of the strength within him, buoyed him up, and that experience of denial and patient labor eventually brought its reward in the economy it taught and in the wonderful facility which it gave to the artist's hand. So surely does good spring from seeming afflictions.

With Mr. Franks, proprietor of the Western Museum, the artist made his first real "engagement," which was to paint the needed dioramas, to *make thunder on the drum, to blow for the organist*,

*These early labors of the great Sculptor are now treasured memories in the Queen City. The "regions" are yet (we believe) in the tide of successful operation, serving to astound and to fill with affright at their wondrous climax of Satanical horrors the uninitiated visitor.

light the lamps and to make himself *generally useful* in those same "Infernal Regions" where Hiram Powers had so successfully officiated! Not a "high art" experience, it must be confessed, but far better than idleness, and the sin of a foolish pride which prevents too many men from honorable labor. With means thus severely earned, William L. was enabled to open a studio. Few customers, however, found their way to it; and many the day the poor artist wondered where the bread for the next was to come from, thus doubly verifying the too frequent experience of the devotees of Art. A patron finally came—one whose knowledge of art and whose cultivated tastes led to a kindly appreciation of the painter's ability. That gentleman was the Rev. E. L. Magoon, then of Cincinnati, later of New-York and now of Albany, well known for his worth of head and heart. Under his encouraging suggestions Mr. Sonntag entered upon that series

of paintings, "The Progress of Civilization," which served, upon their completion, to add greatly to the artist's reputation, and, what was of more *material* consequence, to load him with profitable commissions. These early and very well-known works of Mr. S. deserve more notice than can be given in this allotted space. The fine poem by Wm. Cullen Bryant suggested the subject.

The first of the series presents us Nature in her primitive grandeur, with nothing to indicate the presence of man; illustrating the passage commencing—

"Then all this youthful paradise around."

The second is the same general scene, though viewed in a different air and hour, and point of vision, from the first. It illustrates the lines:

"There stood the Indian hamlet, there the lake
Spreads its blue sheet," &c., &c.

The third picture embodies the artist's conception of America, past, present, and to come. The scene is western—time mid-day. The poet says:

"Look now abroad; another race has filled
The populous borders. Wide the wood recedes,
And towns shoot up, and fertile realms are tilled.
The land is full of harvests and green meads.
Streams numberless," &c., &c.,

and this the painter wrought into a very fine composition.

The fourth painting exemplifies the highest state of civilization. The river, narrow and solitary in the first picture, is here in all its full majesty, covered with the flotillas of commerce; the banks are of richest landscape; spires and towers cut the clear distance; the grand temple of Liberty crowns an eminence overlooking the whole scene, as some guardian spirit. It interprets the poet's splendid conception:

"Here the free spirit of mankind, at length
Throws its last fetters off," &c., &c.

After the completion of his most pressing commissions, the artist gave himself up to the study of nature, in field and wood, spending the succeeding three years in traveling on foot over the most picturesque portions of Kentucky, painting and *finishing* his pictures on the spot. The two seasons following he spent in Virginia, on the Kanawha, and in the vicinity of the "Hawk's Nest," camping

before the latter spot *three months*. By such faithful study of Nature, it were strange if the artist did not learn well of his master of masters! The works produced during these five years of study, served to give the artist high rank, and also to fill his pockets with plenty. Few painters in the country commanded such extensive and lucrative patronage.

"The Hawk's Nest" was among the pictures distributed by the American Art Union, in the year 1850.

The panorama of *Paradise Lost*, exhibited so successfully throughout the country, and at Barnum's Museum, in New-York, was the work of Mr. Sonntag's hands, in great part—sickness alone preventing its entire accomplishment.

After recovering from this illness, the artist painted some splendid scenes for Wood's Theatre, Cincinnati.

Then followed his large work from Longfellow's "*Evangeline*," embodying the passage:

"Into this wonderful land, at the base of the Ozark mountain,
Gabriel far had entered," &c., &c.

This work eventually found its way to California, and is regarded as one of the best pictures in the State.

Studies around Cincinnati followed the *Evangeline*, and a series of brilliant local landscapes were the result. These are mostly owned in the Queen City, and are held above price.

The next composition was from Shelley's "*Alastor*," the passage chosen being:

"The poet wandering on, through Arabia," &c.

This painting, as a whole, is regarded as Sonntag's finest composition, and gave him an undoubted position as one of the leading artists in this country.

In 1853, having amassed a considerable sum as the rewards of his incessant toil and study, and having about \$5,000 in commissions to execute, he was persuaded to visit Europe for further study, and to obtain fine opportunities to fill his engagements. He went abroad, passing in a kind of flying visit of inspection over Europe, returning home after the brief absence of eight months; resolved to finish up his promised work and then again repair to Italy, which he did in 1855. One year was spent in Florence, with great profit, pecuniarily and artistically. His experience at that time was

of such a character as to form the plan for a permanent residence at that delightful old art centre. He is now in New-York painting up his extensive catalogue of works ordered, preparatory to his final leave for his chosen home. With the ease which comes of "comfortable circumstances," with faculties for further study and time for noble, reliant labor, Mr. Sonntag promises to add materially to the laurels with which his countrymen have freely crowned him. May it so be!

The rapidity of Mr. Sonntag's hand, the precision of his touch, the clearness of his lines, the tone of his colors, have served to give his pictures a marked individuality, and, as a consequence, every variety of criticism has been showered upon them. By many his facility is called carelessness; to such we are disposed to answer that, without wishing to cover a fault, we doubt much of the justice of such strictures. Mr. Sonntag *does* execute rapidly, as his long catalogue testifies; but, it is a facility won by years of severest and most minute study of details. His imagination is fertile, his fancy lively, his poetic sensibilities acute; and, it would be wonderful if he were otherwise than rapid in execution. Let the true test be applied: place his pictures beside those of other artists of his position and see if they are, in any wise, inferior in all the details of a picture. Few great artists have lived and wrought many works who have not been charged with "slovenliness," or with "manufacturing" pictures: when such an artist is dead and gone the only regret is that his works are not more numerous! So unreasonable are we.

With regard to Mr. Sonntag's system of coloring and his way of producing his effects, we find much that is fresh, original, and decidedly pleasing. His mannerisms have been pursued so far, at times, as to give a hard, cold expression to his canvas, and the fine drawing and most exquisite perspective have been overlaid by the grays to such an extent as to displease the taste seeking for warmer coloring; but, these *lapses* are not the style of the artist, as the *criticettes* of "the press" are fain to repeat. Go into the artist's studio, gaze upon the twelve or fifteen splendid compositions which adorn its walls, and if the same merit can be found in the same number of paintings by any American artist, we have yet to find them.

Mr. Sonntag has a bright future before him, for he is yet young, vigorous, full of devotion to his art, ambitious; and we see no reason why his hand shall not produce works which shall challenge the admiration of his generation and give his name to immortal mention in the category of truly great artists.

ANNA CORA RITCHIE.

THE STORY of the life of Mrs. Ritchie is full of interest—nay of romance. It is one of those narratives calculated to do good in its relation, for the moral which it teaches. It shows how loving children can make a happy home; how native talent develops character and taste; how ardent attachments may triumph over difficulties; how devotion in love prompts noble sacrifices; how sacrifices, if bravely made and borne, are sure to bring their own just reward; how energy, high moral purpose, consciousness of right, bring hope to fair fruition. In the "*Autobiography*" she says: "If one struggling sister in the great human family, while listening to the story of my life, gain courage to meet and brave severest trials; if she learn to look upon them as blessings in disguise; if she be strengthened in the performance of daily duties however hardly paid; if she be inspired with faith in the power imparted to a strong will, whose end is good; then I am amply rewarded for my labor"—in giving her book to the world. Well and nobly said. It is a pleasing task to contemplate such a life.

Anna Cora Ogden was born at Bordeaux, in France, on the fifth day of March, 1819. Her father, Samuel G. Ogden, Esq., was an eminent New-York merchant, who, by investing as principal in the ill-fated expedition of General Miranda, lost much of his large property. He removed to Bordeaux to recruit his fortunes. The first years of the life of Anna were spent at the country-seat, two miles from Bordeaux, called La Castane. She gives us a most charming insight into

* Mrs. Mowatt says in her autobiography: "this expedition owed its failure to the treachery and ambition of Aaron Burr," &c., &c. Mr. Parton in his "*Life*" of Burr, does not refer to this circumstance, we believe. It certainly became him, as an honest historiographer, to take cognizance of the charge preferred.